Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended)   A method of supporting delivery, from a server to an application, of a data stream associated with a service provided by the server, comprising:

selecting the server;

requesting the service provided by the server; and

automatically and without manual intervention, providing a proxy path between the server and the application for communicating the data stream to the application, wherein the proxy path is a communication path and comprises a plurality of proxies, the plurality of proxies being concatenated together to form a proxy chain with an input of each proxy being connected to an output of each preceding proxy,

coupling a proxy cradle to the proxy chain for handling proxy-to-proxy communications within the proxy chain, and

performing a proxy operation on the data stream during the delivery of the data stream to the application, wherein the proxy operation processes the data stream according to the characteristics required for communicating with the application.

2. (Previously Presented)   The method of Claim 1, wherein said proxy path comprises one proxy.

3. (Previously Presented)   The method of Claim 1, wherein said step of providing the proxy path includes configuring the proxy chain to provide the requested service.

4.   (Previously Presented)   The method of Claim 3, further comprising the step of

configuring the proxy path based on information indicative of at least one of a preference of the application, a characteristic of equipment that will receive the data stream, and a characteristic of the service.

5.   (Currently Amended)   The method of Claim 1, further comprising the steps of

sending from the server side to a proxy execution <u>environment</u> server a request to install the proxy chain in the proxy path, the proxy execution <u>environment</u> server installing the proxy chain thereon in response to said installation request, and

coupling the proxy execution <u>environment</u> server into the proxy path.

6.   (Currently Amended)   The method of Claim 5. further comprising the steps of

the proxy execution <u>environment</u> server

downloading selected proxy modules from proxy repositories and

providing an input network service point, an output network service point and <u>coupled with the</u> [[a]] proxy cradle, all for handling proxy-to-proxy communication within the proxy chain.

7.   (Currently Amended)   The method of Claim 6, further comprising the proxy execution <u>environment</u> server

allocating the necessary network service points for the associated proxy chain enabling the proxy chain to listen for connections and wherein the service points are TCP sockets or UDP sockets.

8.   (Previously Presented)   The method of Claim 1, wherein each of the concatenated proxies are designed as general-purpose proxy service modules and do not require direct communication to the server or the application.

9.   (Currently Amended)   The method of Claim 1, wherein said providing step includes sending from the server side of the proxy path to each of a plurality of proxy execution _environment_ servers a request to install a proxy or concatenated proxy chain from each of the plurality of proxy execution _environment_ servers in the proxy path.

10.   (Currently Amended)   The method of Claim 9, wherein said step of sending the request to each of the plurality of proxy execution _environment_ servers ~~requests~~ includes sending the requests in parallel.

11.   (Currently Amended)   The method of Claim 9, including the proxy execution _environment_ servers
        installing the respective proxies or proxy chains thereon in response to the respective installation request, and
        the proxy execution _environment_ servers sending to the server side of the proxy path information that identifies input and output ports to be used for coupling the respective proxy execution _environment_ servers into the proxy path.

12.   (Currently Amended)   The method of Claim 11, wherein said installing step includes the proxy execution _environment_ servers installing the respective proxies in parallel.

13.   (Currently Amended)   The method of Claim 12, wherein said step of sending input and output port information includes the proxy execution _environment_ servers sending their respective input and output port information to the server side in parallel.

14.   (Currently Amended)   The method of Claim 11, wherein said providing step includes forwarding from the server side of the proxy path to one of the proxy execution <u>environment</u> servers the input port information that was sent to the server side by another of the proxy execution <u>environment</u> servers.

15.   (Currently Amended)   The method of Claim 14, wherein said forwarding step includes, for each of the proxy execution <u>environment</u> servers, forwarding from the server side to the proxy execution <u>environment</u> server the input port information that was sent by another of the proxy execution <u>environment</u> servers.

16.   (Previously Presented)   The method of Claim 1, wherein said proxy operation includes one of data compression, data encryption, data transformation. data transcoding and data caching.

17.   (Currently Amended)   A system for supporting delivery, from a server to an application. of a data stream associated with a service provided by the server, comprising:

an input for receiving a service request; and

a proxy provider apparatus coupled to said input and responsive to the service request for automatically, and without manual intervention,

providing a proxy path between the server and the application for communicating the data stream to the application, wherein the proxy path is a communication path and comprises a plurality of proxies, the plurality of proxies being concatenated together to form a proxy chain, <u>wherein</u>

<u>a proxy cradle is coupled with the proxy chain for handling proxy-to-proxy communications within the proxy chain</u> with an input of each proxy being connected to an output of each preceding proxy, for performing a proxy operation on the data stream during the delivery of the data stream to the application,

wherein the proxy operation processes the data stream according to the characteristics required for communicating with the application.

18.   (Previously Presented)   The system of Claim 17, wherein said proxy path comprises one proxy.

19.   (Currently Amended)   The system of Claim 17, wherein said proxy provider apparatus includes a proxy execution _environment_ server for receiving a request to install a specific proxy in the proxy path and the proxy execution _environment_ server being operable for installing the requested specific proxy

20.   (Currently Amended)   The system of Claim 19, wherein said proxy provider apparatus includes a proxy repository for storing proxies therein. said proxy execution _environment_ server coupled to said proxy repository and operable to download the stored proxies therefrom.

21.   (Currently Amended)   The system of Claim 19. wherein said proxy execution _environment_ server is operable for
providing an input network service point, an output network service point and [[a]] _coupled with the_ proxy cradle; all for handling _proxy-to-proxy_ ~~prosy to proxy~~ communication within the proxy chain.

22.   (Currently Amended)   The system of Claim 21. wherein said proxy execution _environment_ server is operable for allocating necessary network service points for the associated proxy chain thereby enabling the proxy chain to listen for connections, wherein the service utilizes TCP sockets or UDP sockets.

23.   (Currently Amended)   The system of Claim _17_ [[1]] said proxy provider apparatus including a plurality of proxy execution _environment_ servers–for receiving requests to install proxies in the proxy path, each of the plurality of proxy

execution <u>environment</u> servers operable for installing respective proxies therefrom in the proxy path, each said proxy execution <u>environment</u> server further operable for sending to the proxy provider apparatus information which identifies input and output ports to be used for coupling the respective proxy execution <u>environment</u> server into the proxy path.

24 - 55.   (Canceled)

56.   (Previously Presented)   The system of Claim 17, wherein each of the concatenated proxies are designed as general-purpose proxy service modules and do not require direct communication to the server or the application.

57.   (Currently Amended)   The system of Claim 19, wherein the proxy provider apparatus further comprises means for sending requests for proxies, in parallel, to respective proxy execution <u>environment</u> servers.

58.   (Currently Amended)   The system of claim 19, wherein the proxy execution <u>environment</u> servers comprise means for installing the respective proxies in the proxy path in response to the respective installation requests and
    the proxy execution <u>environment</u> servers sending to the server side of the proxy path information that identifies input and output ports to be used for coupling the respective proxy execution <u>environment</u> servers into the proxy path.

59.   (Previously Presented)   The system of claim 58, wherein the proxy execution servers include means for installing the respective proxies in parallel in the proxy path.

60.   (Currently Amended)   The system of claim 17, wherein the means for performing a proxy operation <u>includes</u> means for performing data compression, data encryption, data transformation, data transcoding and data caching.